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UNCLAS HARARE 000563

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/PDPA FOR DALTON, MITCHELL AND SIMS  
AF/S FOR RAYNOR  
NSC FOR JENDAYI FRAZER  
LONDON FOR GURNEY  
PARIS FOR NEARY  
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [KMDR](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION U.S. BLAMED FOR ZIM'S WOES; HARARE

¶1. Under headline "MDC lacks respect for human life" the government-controlled daily "The Herald" used its March 19 editorial to accuse the United States of stirring up the current socioeconomic and political turbulence in Zimbabwe. Excerpts:

¶2. "...As if to give credence to claims by the white Commonwealth, Britain and the United States that the situation in Zimbabwe was deteriorating, the MDC has gone on an orgy of violence and terror against its perceived enemies. Two innocent lives have been lost so far at the hands of the MDC in the battle for the Kuwadzana constituency. While the MDC is petrol-bombing its opponents, burning down buses or deliberately running over innocent pedestrians and firing weapons indiscriminately like lawless hoodlums. . .the American Government is, on the other hand, encouraging this lawlessness with its renewed onslaught on Zimbabwe. By targeting sanctions on the Zimbabwean government as part of measures to remove the ruling ZANU PF from power, the United States has effectively provided cover to the opposition to carry on with its wanton killing, beatings and torture of innocent Zimbabweans.

"...As if to cheer the MDC on, the United States started running an illegal radio station this week to support dissent in Zimbabwe. The pirate radio station was also meant to give impetus to yesterday's mass action. . . The United States also announced the renewal of a so-called executive order by President George W. Bush renewing sanctions and a freeze on alleged assets owned by President Mugabe and 76 other ZANU PF officials. The U.S. freeze has been in place for more than a year but the Americans know full well that there are no such assets in their country. The sanctions are, however, meant to destroy the Zimbabwean economy and instead blame it on the ZANU PF government. Working with the British and a few other European Union countries, the U.S. has managed to squeeze the Zimbabwean economy, shutting its normal offshore loans, grants and investments, resulting in acute shortages of foreign currency that have led to scarcity in fuel and other essential imports. . . ."

SULLIVAN